

REMARKS

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the Office position. Claims 15 to 24 are presented herein.

Due to restriction requirement and election of species, applicants reserve the right to file divisional patent applications to (a) claims 1 to 14 directed to a non-elected invention, and (b) claims 26 to 28 directed to a non-elected species without a generic independent claim of an elected species.

DRAWING REQUIREMENT

The outstanding Office action sets forth an objection to the drawings under 37 CFR 1.83(a). This drawing requirement and the wording are identical to the requirement and wording in an earlier Office action dated September 10, 2003.

In reply, a paper entitled "Submission of Revised Drawings" was filed on December 5, 2003 in answer to the Office action dated September 10, 2003. Therefore, applicants have already complied not only with the Office position dated September 10, 2003 but also with the Office action dated May 21, 2004.

It is noted that the undersigned in a letter signed March 9, 2003 resubmitted papers at the request of Mr. Omar Flores Sanchez (including a Return Postal Receipt Card, Certificate of Mailing with a USPTO stamp of December 5, 2003). These papers included "Submission of Revised Drawings".

Attached to this amendment is a copy of this earlier filed "Submission of Revised Drawings" (including formal drawings).

AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS

In the present amendment support of the substantive additions to claim 15 are present as follows:

- ... claim 26 as filed (“edge channel showing a section substantially closed and comprising movable lids”)
- page 11, lines 4-5 and lines 17-30, as regards the opening of the lids of the channel; claim 1 as filed,
- page 3, lines 3-5 or page 11, lines 17-21 as regards the step of cutting the central portion transversely to the conveyance direction.

Accordingly, all limitations are supported by the original patent application nomenclature.

REJECTION UNDER 35 USC 112

Claims 15 and 17 stand rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. The Office rejection states:

In claim 15, it is not clear what “opening the channel(s) to release at least one edge” encompasses. How opening the channel releases the edge, when the pulling unit 11 is securing the edge in step IV?

In response to this grounds of rejection, claim 15 has been amended in step (v) with insertion of the wording following “one edge”, namely -- so as to allow the central portion to be entrained --. Accordingly, specificity is present in claim 15 (and dependent claim 17).

In summary, the channel shows movable lids. After the edge has been secured in a pulling unit, the lids are open so as to allow the central portion of the web to be entrained. Reconsideration and removal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 USC 102(b)

The outstanding Office action withdraws the previous rejection of record under 35 USC 102(b) based on Collins et al. USP 3,756,527. However, a new rejection of claims 15 and 17 under 35 USC 102(b) is based on Sumida et al. USP 5,899,129.

In support of the grounds of rejection, the Office action states:

Sumida discloses the method of cutting a web comprising: cutting off at least one edge laterally (Fig. 1); cutting said at least one edge along a direction transverse to the conveyance direction (Fig. 10B); taking up said at least one edge into processing line (Fig. 10C); securing said at least one edge (Fig. 11A); opening the channel (Fig. 11B); cutting the central portion (Fig. 1); and forming a loop of edges (Fig. 11A).

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Initially, it is noted Sumida discloses an automatic trimming processing device for automatically processing trimmings generated in a slitter in which a web is run and slit into a plurality of strips. The document notably discloses steps of:

- cutting a trimming (of the side of the web) along the conveyance direction (fig. 1, slitting section 6);
- cutting said at trimming along a direction transverse to the conveyance direction (fig. 1, trimming cutting unit 10);
- catching an end of the trimming (with the trimming hook 26) for conveying the trimming to an air conveyor duct 23, in order to subsequently convey the trimming toward a trimming compactor disposed downstream (col 3., lines 44-65);
- holding the trimming (fig. 11A, due to the trimming hook 26 and subsequently a nip roller 28, col. 5, lines 6-20).

In reply to the disclosure of Sumida, several comments are appropriate:

First, the method of claim 15 of the present invention intends to provide method for cutting a web and subsequent feeding and threading it up into a processing line (emphasis added), so that the processing line according to claim 15 is that intended to be fed with the web.

In contrast, the method disclosed in Sumida is basically a method for processing trimmings, where the web and trimmings follows different ways, e.g. are conveyed along

different lines. The web processing line comprises for instance the take-up section and rollers 3b-d of figures 2-4. The trimming processing line notably comprises an air conveyor duct (see fig. 1). The processing line fed with the trimmings is never fed with the web, at any stage.

Thus, Sumida does not disclose taking an up edge into the processing line through edge channel(s), as in step (iii) of present claim 15, but rather teaches the catching of an end of the trimming for conveying the trimming to an air conveyor duct, in order to subsequently convey the trimming toward a trimming compactor disposed downstream, as mentioned above. Consistently, the air conveyor duct is not designed for processing the web, should it be regarding its dimension (see for example fig. 1). Hence, the trimming is processed first by an air conveyor duct and then by trimming compactor, but is not processed by the processing line in which the web is processed.

Moreover, Sumida is silent about opening channel lids so as to allow the central portion to be entrained – this is however not surprising since the air conveyor duct is neither intended to nor designed for processing the web.

Next, Sumida does not teach securing said at least one edge in a pulling unit located at the other extremity of the processing line (as in step (iv) of present claim 15), since the trimming is not passed at all through the processing line according to the present invention, that is, which processes the web.

Further, Sumida does not teach opening the channel to release said at least one edge (step (v) of present claim 15), since no channel is involved.

Furthermore, Sumida does not teach cutting the central portion after the step of releasing said at least one edge (as in step (vi) of present claim 15) but rather teaches a continuous step of cutting the central portion of the web in strips, which continuous step does not depend on the way the trimming is processing, since the strips and the trimming follow two different lines.

Hence, processing both the at least one edge(s) and the central portion of the web through a common processing line is in complete contrast with Sumida. For instance, processing the web through the trimming processing line of Sumida would deteriorate the web, because of the trimming compactor. Conversely, processing the trimmings with the web processing line would prevent from trimming the web, in contradiction with the intended purpose of Sumida.

As cited in MPEP, section 2143.01: "If proposed modification would render the prior art invention being modified unsatisfactory for its intended purpose, then there is no suggestion or motivation to make the proposed modification. In re Gordon, 733 F.2d 900, 221 USPQ 1125 (Fed. Cir. 1984)."

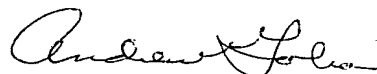
In summary, Sumida teaches away from the present invention and claims directed thereto. Sumida requires different processing for trimming and for the web. The solution provided in claim 15 is not disclosed in the cited prior art, in particular the step of cutting the central portion transversely to the conveyance direction after the opening of the lids of the channel.

Claim 17 represents a patentable advance in the art for the same reasons applied to claim 15.

Additionally, it is submitted that with allowance of independent claim 15, dependent claims directed to species of the invention should also be acted upon and allowed. These dependent species are claims 16 and 18 to 21.

Allowance of claims 15 and 17 is requested. With allowance of these claims, the remaining claims under prosecution should be allowed. A notice of allowance is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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Enclosures